

EXHIBIT 6

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U.S. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
INTERIOR REGION 10 – CALIFORNIA-GREAT BASIN  
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA OFFICE  
TRINITY RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM  
1313 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
WEAVERVILLE, CALIFORNIA 96093

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
REDDING FIELD OFFICE  
6640 LOCKHEED DRIVE  
REDDING, CALIFORNIA 96002

## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and with the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500–1508), the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP) office of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Redding Field Office, have found that the Proposed Action, supported by the analysis disclosed in the Final Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) for the Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Site: Chapman Ranch Phase B (River Mile 83.5–83.8) would result in no significant impact on the human environment, considering the context and intensity of impacts.

Supporting documentation in the EA portion was prepared to meet the requirements of NEPA. For the purposes of NEPA, the EA portion is tiered to the *Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration Program Environmental Impact Statement* and incorporates by reference the *Channel Rehabilitation and Sediment Management Activities for Remaining Phase 1 and Phase 2 Sites, Part 1: Final Master Environmental Impact Report*.

**Recommended by:**

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FONSI No. CGB-EA-2020-025

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Date

FONSI No. DOI-BLM-CA-N060-2020-0015 EA

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
**Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Site:**  
**Chapman Ranch Phase B (River Mile 83.5–83.8)**

**LEAD AGENCY**

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**BACKGROUND AND NEED**

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) completed the Trinity River Division (TRD) of the Central Valley Project (CVP) in 1964, blocking the passage of salmonids and lamprey to habitat upstream of Lewiston Dam and restricting anadromous fish to habitat downstream. The TRD also eliminated coarse sediment transport from over 700 square miles of the upper watershed. Trans-basin diversions from Lewiston Lake diminished annual flows by up to 90 percent and altered the hydrologic regime of the Trinity River for a 40-mile reach downstream. The consequences of diminished flows included encroachment of riparian vegetation, the establishment of riparian berms, and changes in alluvial processes at various locations along the river as far downstream as the North Fork Trinity River. These geomorphic changes resulted in a decrease in the diversity of species and age classes of riparian vegetation along the river, impaired floodplain function, and adversely affected fish habitat.

In 1994, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), as the lead agency for NEPA, and Trinity County, as the lead agency for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), began the NEPA/CEQA process for developing the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The 2000 Record of Decision (ROD) for the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (FEIS/EIR) (December 19, 2000; USDI 2000) directed Reclamation and the USFWS to implement the Flow Evaluation Alternative, coupled with additional watershed protection efforts (described in the Mechanical Restoration Alternative), as the Preferred Alternative identified in the FEIS/EIR to restore the Trinity River's anadromous fishery. Through the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP), the ROD directed Reclamation to restore the Trinity River fishery by implementing a combination of higher releases from Lewiston Dam (up to 11,000 cubic feet per second [cfs]), floodplain infrastructure improvements, channel rehabilitation projects, fine and coarse sediment management, watershed

restoration, and an Adaptive Environmental Assessment and Management Program. As a project-level NEPA document, the FEIS/EIR provides guidance for policy decisions associated with managing Trinity River flows, and as a programmatic NEPA document, it provides first-tier support of related mechanical restoration and sediment management actions. The 2009 Master EIR provided a more specific analysis of non-flow elements of the TRRP and was incorporated by reference in the NEPA document for the Proposed Action to support NEPA decisions required by Reclamation and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The TRRP, acting under the guidance of the Trinity Management Council (TMC), provides the overall program direction required to implement the 2000 ROD. TMC member agencies include Reclamation, USFWS, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the Hoopa Valley Tribe (HVT), the Yurok Tribe (YT), the California Natural Resources Agency represented by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), and Trinity County. In addition to providing technical expertise for the design and review of the rehabilitation sites, the TRRP provides technical and administrative support to the TMC related to both scientific evaluations of the restoration progress and management implementation.

The TRRP is responsible for the overall implementation of the 2009 Master EIR, which identified the Chapman Ranch Phase B site as a Trinity River rehabilitation site. The Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Site: Chapman Ranch Phase B (River Mile [RM] 83.5–83.8) project (Proposed Action) includes placement of a new bend in the river, reduction of riparian encroachment, placement of large wood, physical alteration of alluvial features (e.g., floodplains and side channels), construction of hydraulic structures (wood and log features), and removal/replacement of riparian vegetation at strategic locations. Extensive revegetation of native riparian vegetation areas (woody and wetland species) and management of upland mixed-conifer habitats are included in the Proposed Action. These rehabilitation activities would increase habitat suitability and availability for salmonids and other native fish and wildlife species during a wide range of river flow conditions. The Chapman Ranch Phase B site is located in part on public lands managed by the BLM Redding Field Office and by the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Construction activities at the site are anticipated to begin in 2021 and continue through 2022. Construction activities near residential areas would be scheduled between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. No construction activities would be scheduled for Sundays.

The project environmental study limit (ESL) encompasses approximately 66 acres, including 29 acres of BLM land, 27 acres of National Forest System land, and 10 acres of private land. Activities would take place on approximately 43 acres. The Chapman Ranch Phase B rehabilitation site is located about 2.5 miles south (upstream) of Junction City, California, in Township 33 North, Range 10 West, Sections 19, 20, 29, and 30, Mount Diablo Baseline and Meridian (MDB&M) (Figure 1-1). [All figures, tables, appendices, and citations referenced in this document are in the EA/IS.] The river elevation at the site is approximately 1,500 feet above mean sea level.

Land ownership and the project ESL boundary are shown on Figure 2-1. TRRP staff, with interdisciplinary review from the BLM and TRRP partners, developed the ESL boundaries to incorporate the rehabilitation activities described in Chapter 2 of the EA/IS.

Public access to the project ESL is at river left via Sky Ranch Road, which intersects with SR 299 approximately 2 miles north of the project ESL. Access to project public lands on river left is only via the river.

Rehabilitation activities directed by the ROD and further described in the EA/IS, in conjunction with annual ROD flow releases, are expected to contribute to the restoration of the Trinity River mainstem fishery. Implementing channel rehabilitation work at the Chapman Ranch Phase B site would continue the

implementation of the ROD and would contribute to the restoration of aquatic habitat in the mainstem Trinity River through the development of properly functioning channel conditions. The location of the Chapman Ranch Phase B project in relation to other TRRP sites is illustrated in Figure 1-1.

The EA/IS for the project considered two alternatives: the No Action Alternative (Alternative 2 in the EA/IS) and the Proposed Action (Alternative 1 in the EA/IS). After consideration of the environmental commitments and project design features listed in Chapter 2 and Appendix D, impacts from the Proposed Action would be less than significant pursuant to NEPA. Details concerning these alternatives and other alternatives considered but not carried forward for evaluation are included in Chapter 2.

An interdisciplinary team identified discrete activity areas within the boundaries of the Chapman Ranch Phase B site. Each activity area was established to meet a suite of specific objectives in conformance with the overall goals and objectives outlined by the TRRP. Activity areas are labeled using an alpha-numeric system based on the type of activity that would occur in a specific place. Riverine activities are labeled with an R followed by the construction site number (e.g., R-1, R-2); upland activities are labeled with a U followed by the construction site number; in-channel work areas are identified with an IC; access routes are identified with an A; and construction staging/use areas are identified with a C followed by the construction site number.

The TRRP has developed programmatic objectives for channel rehabilitation projects that are described in Chapter 2. Ultimately, the goals of the channel rehabilitation efforts are to provide functional aquatic habitat for all life stages of anadromous salmonids over a range of flow conditions; to provide suitable salmonid rearing habitat, presently believed to be a limiting factor in the system; and to reestablish healthy alluvial river geomorphic processes that would maintain high-quality salmonid habitat at a dynamic equilibrium.

### **Proposed Action (Alternative 1 – from the EA/IS)**

The activities proposed at the Chapman Ranch Phase B site are briefly described below; additional details are provided in Chapter 2 and Appendix D.

The Chapman Ranch Phase B project reach begins approximately 2.5 miles upstream of the Dutch Creek Road Bridge in Junction City. Habitat for threatened salmonids, steelhead, and other aquatic and riparian species is currently impaired throughout this reach by the legacy of dredger mining and water diversions that have altered natural variable flows. The Proposed Action has been developed to strike a balance between active (e.g., construction) and passive (e.g., flow regime changes) methods for restoring aquatic and riparian habitat while facilitating on a smaller scale dynamic fluvial geomorphic processes that existed before Lewiston Dam was completed.

The Proposed Action consists of a number of rehabilitation activities at the Chapman Ranch Phase B site. These activities are based on those described and analyzed in Section 2.3.2 of the Master EIR (Regional Water Board and Reclamation 2009). The Chapman Ranch Phase B project activities are intended to work in conjunction with the Chapman Ranch Phase A project, which was completed in 2019, to restore habitat for anadromous fish along the entire Chapman Ranch Rehabilitation Area.

The proposed rehabilitation activities are briefly described below. Appendix D of the EA/IS provides a more in-depth description of the design objectives and discusses each activity area in detail. Except for recontouring and vegetation removal, each activity type and activity area has been assigned a unique alphabetic and numeric identification and descriptive label that corresponds to the type and location of the activity areas illustrated in Figure 2-1 and described in Table 2-1.



**Recontouring and Vegetation Removal**

Under the recontouring and vegetation removal activities, the ground surface would be modified to reduce riparian encroachment and the risk of stranding of juvenile salmonids. To varying degrees, vegetation would be cleared and removed at all activity areas that would be subject to rehabilitation activities, except for river crossings. Where recontouring is part of the Proposed Action (e.g., floodplain lowering), the entire site would be subject to vegetation removal, but, where possible, riparian vegetation (e.g., willows) would be salvaged and stored within the project environmental study limit (ESL) for use in subsequent revegetation efforts.

Grading would be required to construct or enhance topographic features that could develop into functional riparian habitat; excavation and the placement of fill would be balanced. In addition to the activity areas that would be cleared before grading, site-specific removal of whole trees (e.g., conifers and hardwoods) would be required to enhance the safety of the worksite, reduce fuel loading, and improve local conditions for individual tree growth and wildlife. The trees that are removed would be used to construct large wood habitat structures. As illustrated by Figure 2-1, upland and contractor use areas include discrete locations where removal of vegetation is anticipated based on coordination with, and authorization by, the BLM, the Forest Service, and landowners.

Vegetation removed from activity areas, including contractor use areas, would be used for in-river placement. Large wood would be chipped or masticated for use as organic material to increase nutrients and enhance the water holding in revegetation areas. Activities would be completed using a variety of methods, including hand tools and heavy equipment such as excavators, bulldozers, dump trucks, and, potentially, scrapers. Where feasible, existing native riparian vegetation would be maintained to facilitate future recruitment. To reduce or eliminate the need to import wood from off-site for use in design features, mature trees at the site may be used in the construction of habitat and flow modification features, if/as authorized by landowners. Using trees from the site would reduce or eliminate the potential for introduction of invasive species such as weeds and insects and plant pathogens to the site.

**Riverine Construction (R) - Lowered Floodplains, Collection Channel**

Three types of inundated surfaces—floodplains, and high- and low-flow channels—would be constructed to be inundated and function at flows ranging from about 500 to more than 7,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). Activities associated with the construction of these surfaces would also enhance the type and degree of connection to the mainstem at various flows. These activities are intended to expand the surface area of the channel that could be inundated by reoccurring flows below the ordinary high-water mark (i.e., 6,000 cfs). Vegetation would be cleared as necessary, and earth would be excavated to meet design elevations for periodic inundation. Under the Proposed Action, the construction of these features would occur at R-1, R-6, R-10, R-11, and R-12. See Table 2-1 and Appendix D for more details on these features.

Newly inundated surfaces would provide important rearing and slow-water habitat for juvenile salmonids and other native anadromous fish and wildlife. They would also increase the likelihood of channel migration resulting in enhanced sinuosity, thereby providing the habitat variability that was historically present and is required to support the rapid growth of native fishes. Removal of alluvial material and placement of log jams would be used to create lowered and tiered floodplains, side channels, and pools. Native riparian vegetation would be planted in newly lowered floodplains where post-project conditions would also encourage natural recruitment. Revegetation efforts would be consistent with the requirements and commitments outlined in the TRRP's 2016 Draft Riparian Revegetation and Monitoring Plan (Draft RRMP). This plan requires supplemental efforts (e.g., in-planting, weed control, irrigation) as necessary to establish riparian vegetation to meet the standard of no net loss in riparian vegetation from pre-project levels.

Up to six beaver dam analogue (BDA) structures may be built in the Area R-11 side-channel complex (see Figure 3-1). BDAs will be built from pine or fir posts, arroyo and narrowleaf willow cuttings, hay, and sand, silt, clay, gravel, and cobble. BDAs provide areas of low-velocity refugia suitable for a variety of aquatic, terrestrial, and avian species, and are intended to increase the water surface elevation and inundation surfaces at low flows. The increased water surface elevation associated with BDAs at low flows would help increase the success of natural riparian recruitment and plantings.

### **In-Channel Construction (IC)**

In-channel construction includes those activities that would occur in the river under base-flow conditions (e.g., 450 cfs) during the in-channel construction window (July 15 to October 15). After September 15, best management practices (BMPs) would be in place to minimize impacts on adult coho and Chinook salmon. The construction of various types and sizes of grade control structures, including construction or excavation of alluvial features (e.g., bars, riffles, and pools), would increase channel complexity through the promotion of channel migration, increased sinuosity, reduced fine sediment storage, increased coarse sediment transport, and restoration of depositional features (e.g., riffles, bars, and islands) available for spawning and rearing habitat. Riffles are the shallower, faster-moving sections of a river. Gravel bars and islands provide habitat complexity as well as other ecological functions.

The Proposed Action would include a meander channel complex that spans activity areas IC-1, IC-2, IC-3, and IC-4 and is intended to create a meander sequence with a bar-pool-riffle morphology that conforms to the current TRRP flow regime<sup>1</sup>. Construction of this complex would increase channel length, complexity, and sinuosity and reduce slope in this section of the channel. See Table 2-1 and Appendix D for more details on in-channel construction features specific to the Proposed Action.

The meander complex would provide a diversity of water depths and velocities across a wider range of flows than the existing mainstem channel configuration. Activity areas IC-1, IC-2, and IC-3 would form the meander channel, with the pool connected to riffles at IC-1 and IC-3. SLJ-1 and medial bar IC-4 would force approximately 70 percent of flows up to 7,155 cfs into the newly constructed channel.

During the construction of in-channel activity areas, earthen berms would be left as necessary near the upstream and downstream ends of constructed features to ensure that water quality standards are met. These berms would be removed at the end of construction if the water within these contained areas is of appropriate quality for discharge to the river, or they may be left in place for removal by subsequent high flows. Alternatively, water in the constructed features may be pumped to uplands or slowly metered into the mainstem river post-construction. These techniques would ultimately reduce the amount of turbid water that would reach the Trinity River and would ensure that water quality permit requirements are met (e.g., no more than 20 nephelometric turbidity units at 500 feet downstream of construction). (Regional Water Board 2015).

### **Upland (U)**

Excavated materials (e.g., fill) that would not be used for instream construction would be placed in upland environments as fill on terraces formerly subjected to a variety of placer mining activities. See Table 2-1 and Appendix D for more details on upland features specific to the Proposed Action.

Upland areas include U-1, which will mainly be a spoils area but may also provide coarse material for constructing project features such as riffles and point bars; U-2, which will be a spoils area but may also provide project rock material, as needed; and U-3, U-4, and U-5, which will all be used as spoils sites for

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<sup>1</sup> A description of the typical releases for river restoration can be found at <https://www.trrp.net/restoration/flows/typical-releases/>.

excavated materials. All upland areas would be revegetated with native plants after project activities are complete.

Upland activity areas have been located to ensure that there would be no increase in the elevation of the 100-year floodplain, consistent with requirements of Trinity County's Floodplain Ordinance (FEMA 2016). These activity areas would be used to place excess material excavated in the construction of riverine and in-channel activity areas. The boundaries of these fill areas were defined using a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-approved modeling process; field verification by surveyors and engineers was performed to ensure these areas would be located at an elevation above the FEMA 100-year floodplain. Within these activity areas, the depth of fill would range from about 1 foot to as much as 35 feet from the activity area's edge, depending on the size and location of the activity area. Fill materials would be spread in uniform layers that would blend in with the natural terrain for revegetation.

#### **Detailed Master EIR Activities to Provide Clarity Beyond That in Master EIR Table 2-1 and Its Activity Descriptions**

Impacts associated with the use of organic (e.g., large wood, slash) and inorganic (e.g., boulders) materials were covered in the Master EIR under Sediment Management activities along with other activities that would facilitate channel construction and maintenance (e.g., excavation and placement of alluvial material in in-channel and riverine areas).

Woody material is a natural part of healthy rivers. It provides essential habitat for aquatic species by providing cover from high flows and predators. The low-velocity areas collect suitable spawning materials, and woody organic materials are a food source for aquatic insects. It can also help create and maintain beneficial habitat features such as pools, islands, and gravel bars.

The installation of structured log jams (SLJs) and wood placement (WP) are intended to mimic natural wood features that form under historic conditions. The primary on-site sources of wood would include upland and contractor use areas and, to a lesser degree, riverine excavation areas. Where possible, whole trees, including the rootwad, would be removed and used in the construction of SLJ and WP features. In addition, trees removed as part of clearing activities may be felled, bucked, and yarded to locations where SLJs are constructed to meet size specifications. Slash generated from tree removal activities would also be incorporated into the SLJ features and wood placement. Excess slash would be chipped or masticated and used as mulch for erosion control and revegetation efforts. Figure 2-1 shows areas where WP is likely and where SLJs would be used.

A combination of SLJ and WP features would be used to strengthen highly erosive points in select activity areas (e.g., IC-3 and R-3) until vegetation is established. In addition to erosion control, these features would be integrated into the design of R and IC activity areas to provide habitat cover and structure and would slow high-flow velocities to improve aquatic habitat over a range of flows. Slash from on-site and off-site sources would be used to increase site productivity, provide effective ground cover on disturbed areas, and function as cover habitat for terrestrial organisms.

Project features incorporating large wood pieces were designed to create habitat and prevent the recapture of the existing mainstem, while simultaneously allowing the design channel morphology to evolve over time naturally. In total, up to 400 logs would be incorporated into habitat structures in addition to 18 whole tree placements and 1,700 cubic yards of slash (see Appendix D and Figure 2-1).

Structured log jam features would include toe logs set at the same elevation as the channel bed elevation. These logs would stabilize the toe of the channel bank and provide a foundation on which to build the key logs, slash pile, cuttings, and rock, and reduce the tendency for the toe of the bank to slump in case channel incision occurs. A layer of key logs to hold the structure together would be installed on top of the



toe logs perpendicular to flow. In some cases, it may be beneficial to place the rootwads of key logs into the flow path at a minimum of a 45-degree angle to flow, which would increase stability of the SLJ. Slash would be placed under some of the key log rootwads as well as thin layers on top of the key rootwads before the addition of ballast and backfill. The intended result is a sequence of cut banks, rootwad cover, and fine woody debris, providing year-round salmonid rearing habitat and better protecting the channel bank from erosion.

Because of uncertainties about the availability, types, shapes, and sizes of the wood and the planned construction methods, the exact amounts and locations of wood placement are not known at this time. Trees, treetops, and branches for use in constructing large wood structures would be obtained onsite.<sup>2</sup> and/or opportunistically from other lawful sources (e.g., public or private lands where vegetation management activities have occurred) and delivered to the project ESL. Final WP locations and dimensions of SLJs would be determined in the field based on direction from Reclamation's field engineer.

### **Contractor Use Areas (C)**

Contractor use areas would be used for stockpiling materials, staging equipment, contractor parking, and similar activities. They may also serve as transportation corridors for moving equipment and materials from one activity area to another. In this event, water would be applied to these areas for dust abatement. To support the intent of rehabilitation, the design team designated contractor use areas in locations that avoid sensitive resources. Water from on-site sources.<sup>3</sup> would be applied to these areas for dust abatement as directed by the Contracting Officer.

Seven activity areas would be available as contractor use areas. One of these areas (C-2 a and b) would be a full contractor use area, where minor grading and clearing of vegetation would occur, and the area would be used for staging and stockpiling of construction equipment. The remaining six areas would be limited contractor use areas where disturbance would be minimized.

Vehicular access to three of these areas (C-5, C-6, and C-7) would be limited by vegetation. These limited contractor use areas would be used primarily for pedestrian access and minor disturbance associated with the construction of area R-11. Although some minor clearing and grading may be required to provide access to work in these areas, an effort would be made to avoid mature vegetation to the extent practicable.

Four of these areas (C-1, C-2, C-3, and C-4) would be directly associated with the construction and revegetation of riverine and in-channel activity areas (including in-channel wood features). These areas would be necessary for the temporary storage of equipment and materials (e.g., gravel, large wood, slash). Typically, these activity areas are subject to clearing and/or grading to varying degrees to ensure safe and efficient temporary work areas. These activity areas would also be used to store and stage materials (e.g., logs, boulders) at several discrete locations identified by the landowners.

### **Access Routes (A)**

Temporary access routes would be constructed to connect the activity areas to the main entrance route (Figure 2-1 and Table 2-1)<sup>4</sup>. Access roads throughout the site would support equipment access and construction within the project ESL, on both the left bank via Phase A access from Dutch Creek Road and the right bank via Sky Ranch Road. Whenever possible, existing roads would be used for access, although

<sup>2</sup> Appendix D, Table D-5 lists the maximum estimated tree removal for each activity area.

<sup>3</sup> Water pumps used in the Trinity River would conform to CDFW and NMFS screening criteria.

<sup>4</sup> On average, access routes would be 15-18 feet wide with pull-outs 30 feet wide to allow vehicles to pass each other; typically, about every 1,000 feet. The lengths of route segments are listed in Table 2-1.

some widening may be necessary. The total length of access roads to be used during Phase B construction is 1.3 miles.

There are six routes identified as discrete activity areas (A-3, A-5, A-6, A-6a, A-9, and A-15). None of these are associated with an existing route open to the public. These routes would primarily be used by a wide array of heavy equipment and other vehicles, often requiring two-way traffic. The site-specific design and use of these routes would consider factors like topography, soils, existing vegetation, and the need for future vehicle access for revegetation maintenance and post-construction maintenance. The routes would remain inconspicuous to river users and those outside of the project area and would not be actively maintained in order to comply with Wild and Scenic River Act requirements.

BMPs would be used to reduce the impacts of road-related sediment on the riparian and aquatic environments (see Appendix E).

#### **Temporary Crossings (X)**

Two temporary river crossings (X-1, X-2) would be required. River crossings would facilitate the movement of large equipment and materials from bank to bank. River crossings would be constructed of coarse material (see Figure 2-1). Coarse material for Area X-1 shall meet specifications provided for Area IC-1. Coarse material for Area X-2 shall meet specifications provided for Area IC-3. The number of times the crossings are used would be kept to a minimum to meet the turbidity requirements of the permits. The river crossings, made of clean gravel, would be graded to final design elevations or left in place to be moved downstream by high flows post-construction. Construction of fords would use imported clean gravel and native alluvial materials excavated from the bed and bank of the Trinity River or adjacent sources. All temporary crossings would be designed and constructed to meet the requirements for heavy equipment such as trucks and excavators. All excavated material (e.g., from lowering floodplains) would be placed on the same side of the river from which it was taken. See Table 2-1 for more temporary crossing details.

Due to requirements to retain passage for fish and boats, at least one-third of each river crossing would be submerged to a minimum depth of 1 foot under base flow conditions. The construction of these temporary crossings would likely require some vegetation removal on either side of the crossing within an approved activity area adjacent to the crossing (e.g., IC-1). All temporary crossings would be constructed in a manner that does not impede the passage of aquatic organisms or navigability of vessels at the crossings. The general construction schedule is outlined in Section 2.1.10.

Impacts on vegetation are anticipated in most activity areas. Unlike for other activities, revegetation is not illustrated in Figure 2-1 because it overlaps with most of the other activity areas. Most of the areas left barren after construction (e.g., spoils areas, graded features, and disturbed portions of contractor-use areas) would be planted. However, no areas would be disturbed explicitly so that they would be replanted. The temporary access routes would be planted with conifers and madrones as part of decommissioning.

Project activities are designed to ensure that riparian vegetation, in particular, is minimally affected by the implementation of the Proposed Action and is replaced at a 1:1 ratio with plantings and natural revegetation to meet CDFW's standard of no net loss of riparian area habitat within the Trinity River corridor. Revegetation would provide aquatic refugia at high flows, improve terrestrial habitat for birds and other wildlife, provide future wood recruitment, and provide future terrestrial nutrient input to the river. Revegetation efforts would emphasize actions to create conditions that promote natural revegetation via the creation of wet (riparian) conditions. These efforts would include incorporating woody material into the soil matrix in upland activity areas to enhance moisture retention.

Revegetation of riparian and upland areas would rely on a combination of planting and natural recruitment of native species, consistent with TRRP's 2016 Draft RRMP and the needs of the Forest Service, the BLM, and other cooperating, responsible, and trustee agencies and landowners. Native willows salvaged from activity areas during initial clearing efforts would be stored and used to revegetate activity areas; the willows would be replanted during construction to speed vegetation recovery. Replanting of affected native vegetation (e.g., shrubs, trees) would be completed after construction in accordance with a site-specific revegetation plan prepared by the TRRP and may include watering during the first 3 years post-planting. Water for any irrigation would be pumped from the Trinity River, consistent with existing riparian water rights as made available from willing landowners, or the river on public lands as authorized by the Forest Service and/or BLM. Post-project monitoring may indicate the need for additional irrigation and other measures to ensure successful revegetation. These measures may include weeding, in-planting, and re-planting, as conditions require.

The revegetation plan at the Phase B rehabilitation site would include several planting zones; each zone would have different combinations of herbaceous, shrub, and tree species. Plantings in wetlands and at the toe of slopes would be herbaceous and have approximately 3 feet between plant centers, with about 5,500 plants per acre. Plantings in willow, cottonwood, and transition zones would be sedges, shrubs, and trees and would have approximately 5 to 8 feet between plant centers, with about 872 plants per acre. Plantings in upland zones would be shrubs and trees and would have approximately 10 to 12 feet between plant centers with about 326 plants per acre. Willow trenches would be installed, and willow cuttings would be planted at the density of 10 trees per linear foot. Approximately 16.5 acres would be planted with live plants, and 28 acres (much of it overlapping planted areas) would be seeded with native grasses and mulched.

Soil amendments, such as locally obtained wood grindings and slash, would be incorporated into the soil before planting, and all disturbed areas greater than 4 feet above the summer baseflow water surface elevation would be mulched with weed-free wheat straw at the rate of 2 tons per acre. Revegetation activities (e.g., planting and watering, as appropriate) may start during the latter part of the construction efforts and would continue during the wet season (October through March) after final grading and site stabilization measures have been completed. Planting and seeding efforts may extend into the year following construction, depending on site and weather conditions. Herbaceous bare root material and hardwood support poles would be used if planting occurs in or after November.

## **FINDINGS**

Both the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives were evaluated in the EA/IS with respect to their impacts in the following issue areas: land use, geomorphic environment, water resources, water quality, fishery resources, vegetation, wildlife, wetlands, recreation, socioeconomics, cultural resources, air quality, visual resources, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, public services and utilities/energy, transportation/traffic circulation, environmental justice, and tribal trust. Based on the following summary of the implementation effects of the Proposed Action (as discussed fully in the EA/IS), there would be no significant impacts to the quality of the human environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement (EIS) or a supplement to the existing EIS is not necessary and will not be prepared.

### **Aesthetics/Visual Resources**

Potential impacts of project activities on visual resources would include changes brought about by the removal of vegetation, construction of inundated surfaces, creation of access roads, and the presence of equipment in the project ESL. These activities could result in temporary degradation and/or obstruction of a scenic view. Over the long term, implementation of the Proposed Action is expected to complement the visual resources and aesthetic values of the project ESL by restoring the function and form typical of an

alluvial river. The design of the Proposed Action incorporates the diversity of the landscape and vegetation types in the project vicinity into the character of the rehabilitated riverine and upland areas. Retention of existing topographic features as well as natural revegetation and manual planting would lessen the degree of visual impacts and improve the aesthetic quality of the affected reach of the Trinity River.

#### **Air Quality including Greenhouse Gases**

Construction activities would generate short-term and localized fugitive dust, gas and diesel emissions, that could affect air quality. Reclamation would implement project design features, including requiring provisions in construction documents that minimize construction-related impacts on air quality in order to minimize impacts to air quality.

#### **Cultural Resources, including Tribal Cultural Resources and Indian Sacred Sites**

The BLM has designated Reclamation as the lead federal agency for the Section 106 process for this Proposed Action on behalf of both agencies. Under a joint Programmatic Agreement (PA) between BLM and Reclamation and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Reclamation has determined that the Proposed Action will not adversely affect cultural resources. The Forest Service has completed the Section 106 process under its own PA with the SHPO and has independently determined that the Proposed Action will not adversely affect cultural resources on its managed lands.

Implementing the Proposed Action would result in no adverse effect on Historic Properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). All known cultural resources have been recorded and documented, as described in Chapter 3. No Indian Sacred Sites have been identified in or near the project ESL. The avoidance of cultural resource sites, in conjunction with the inclusion of environmental commitments described in Table 2-2, would ensure that implementation of the Proposed Action would have no significant effect on cultural resources, as implemented through the TRRP.

#### **Environmental Justice**

There is no evidence to suggest that the Proposed Action would cause a disproportionately high adverse human health or environmental effect on minority and low-income populations compared to other area residents. No disproportionate or specific health risks or other impacts on low-income or minority groups would be associated with the Proposed Action.

#### **Fisheries Resources**

To comply with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), TRRP staff submitted a Biological Assessment (BA) to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in December 2019 concerning project effects on the federally and state-listed (threatened) Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast (SONCC) evolutionarily significant unit of coho salmon. The TRRP office completed formal consultation with NMFS on the effects of TRRP sediment management and channel rehabilitation and monitoring, as well as the potential effects of floodplain restoration work throughout the Trinity River watershed rather than only on the mainstem Trinity River. The NMFS' August 2020 Trinity River Restoration Program Biological Opinion describes the implementation strategies and conservation measures that will be employed during proposed TRRP construction at the Chapman Ranch Phase B Project.

Temporary construction impacts on fish-rearing habitat would be minimized through the implementation of environmental commitments and project design features. In the long term, changes to physical rearing habitat associated with project implementation are expected to be beneficial. Collective improvements in fluvial channel dynamics contributed by the Proposed Action, in conjunction with future channel rehabilitation projects throughout the Trinity River between Lewiston Dam and the North Fork Trinity River, are ultimately expected to improve spawning and rearing habitat for all life stages of anadromous



salmonids. Because effects would generally be localized and because the Proposed Action includes commitments and project design features to avoid and minimize adverse impacts on fish, effects to fisheries resources would be less than significant.

### **Geomorphology and Soils, including Geology, Geological Hazards, and Mineral Resources**

Implementation of the Proposed Action, including the environmental commitments and project design features listed in Chapter 2 and Appendix D, would be consistent with the 10 healthy river attributes described in the Trinity River Flow Evaluation Study (USFWS and HVT 1999), the basis for the TRRP efforts to restore and enhance native fish and wildlife populations. It is also consistent with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy, as described in Appendix C. Project construction activities and related disturbance would increase the potential for short-term wind and water erosion. However, project implementation would include project design features such as sediment and erosion control measures to reduce and avoid potential short-term construction impacts on soils. Unique geologic resources or hazards are not present in the project ESL. Therefore, impacts on these resources would be less than significant.

### **Hazardous Materials**

Activities associated with the Proposed Action would use potentially hazardous materials (e.g., oil and fuels) associated with the operation of vehicles and construction equipment during implementation. Implementation of environmental commitments and BMPs would minimize the potential for any project-related hazardous materials to become a public health or resource hazard (see Appendix E). These practices would ensure that impacts with respect to hazardous materials would be less than significant.

### **Hydrology and Flooding**

Based on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Hydraulic Engineering Center River Analysis System (HEC-RAS) model used by Trinity County to assess compliance with Trinity County's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, implementation of the Proposed Action, including excavation or placement of alluvial materials in the 100-year floodplain and low-flow channel, would not increase the base flood elevation of the Trinity River. Additionally, project implementation would not result in a significant risk of injury, death, or loss involving flooding or erosional processes. The proposed activities are expected to have minimal, if any, effects on groundwater elevations or groundwater quality. Therefore, the impacts on water resources would be less than significant.

### **Indian Trust Assets**

TRRP's overarching goals of restoring, enhancing, and conserving the natural production of anadromous fisheries, native plant communities, associated wildlife resources, and overall health of the Trinity River basin are consistent with federal Tribal Trust responsibilities. The primary TRRP goals originate partly from the federal government's trust responsibility to protect fishing rights for ceremonial, subsistence, and commercial purposes of the region's Indian tribes. Under the Proposed Action, the Trinity River would continue to support Tribal Trust assets. Several short-term impacts would occur that would affect Tribal Trust assets, including impacts to geology, fluvial geomorphology, and soils; water quality; fishery resources; and vegetation, wildlife, and wetlands. These impacts are generally associated with construction activities that would temporarily affect resources in the project ESL. Potential impacts on Tribal Trust assets would be minimized by project design criteria implemented to protect those assets. The impacts to Tribal Trust assets would be less than significant.

### **Land Use, including Agricultural Lands**

The Proposed Action would not change the uses of the project ESL lands nor require changes to land use allocations or zoning designations, including agricultural forest lands. Temporary disruptions to nearby property owners and recreationists using the river and adjacent land near the project ESL could occur during the rehabilitation activities (i.e., 3 to 6 months for construction and up to 5 years for revegetation



efforts). However, no long-term impacts are anticipated, and the use of the land in the project ESL would be the same as under current conditions. The restored floodplain and habitats would enhance the area for recreationists and would maintain open space and scenic views near the private residences.

The Proposed Action is located in Trinity County, California, and would be consistent with Trinity County's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, which provides development standards for land in Trinity County, including areas located within the Trinity River floodplain. The BLM's Redding Resource Management Plan (RMP) (BLM 1993) describes various objectives for resource conditions applicable to federal lands in the project ESL, and the rehabilitation activities would help the BLM to achieve these objectives for the Trinity River. The Proposed Action would also help the BLM ensure compliance with the RMP by helping to meet Northwest Forest Plan Aquatic Conservation Strategy guidelines.

Short-term land-use impacts resulting from the Proposed Action would be minimal because of project design criteria that require maintenance of public and private access to the Trinity River, adjacent residents, and businesses. Additionally, project implementation would not prevent existing land uses from continuing or impede future land uses. Therefore, impacts on land use would be less than significant.

### **Noise**

During the construction phase of the Proposed Action, noise from construction activities would temporarily dominate the noise environment in the project ESL. Construction noise would be temporary and would be expected to occur primarily between the months of July and December; construction activities would be scheduled between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday to minimize potential noise impacts to area residences. During working hours, Reclamation would ensure that the contractor operates all equipment to minimize noise impacts to nearby sensitive receptors (residences adjacent to the project ESL, etc.). Noise impacts resulting from the implementation of the Proposed Action would be temporary and minimal.

### **Public Health and Safety**

Hazards to the public were assessed in the Master EIR, and no issues were identified. Indirect public health or safety concerns are assessed in the Air Quality, Noise, Recreation, and Transportation and Traffic sections. No direct or significant indirect impacts to public health and safety would result from the Proposed Action.

### **Public Services and Utilities/Energy**

The Proposed Action would not disrupt electrical or telephone service within or adjacent to the project ESL. A project-specific traffic control plan, including traffic control associated with project activities, would be implemented. The Proposed Action is not expected to cause more than minimal, if any, disruptions to public services. Access for mobilization and demobilization of heavy equipment, however, may require a higher level of traffic control for local roadways and may disrupt traffic flow and circulation before, during, and after construction (see Transportation/Traffic Circulation below). Any disruptions to public services resulting from mobilization and demobilization of heavy equipment are expected to be minimal and of short duration.

### **Recreation**

Construction activities could result in temporary disruptions to public access from Sky Ranch Road on river right and access to private lands on river left. However, river access and recreational opportunities would continue to be available at other locations along the river upstream (Evans Bar) and downstream (Sky Ranch). Potential disruptions and hazards to recreational activities within the project area would be temporary and minimal. Because construction of the Proposed Action (e.g., temporary crossings and associated equipment movement) could affect the safety of recreational users, signage would be employed

to notify river users to be cautious of heavy equipment in the river corridor. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Action could lower the Trinity River's aesthetic values for recreationists by increasing its turbidity; however, increases in turbidity are expected to be localized and of short duration.

### **Socioeconomics, Population, and Housing**

The Proposed Action could directly generate short-term income growth through the payment of wages and salaries for individuals working on the construction of the project, but would result in little long-term increased economic activity. Because of the limited size and duration of the project, impacts on socioeconomic conditions, population, or housing would be negligible.

### **Transportation/Traffic Circulation**

Construction equipment and vehicles would temporarily increase traffic on local roads around the project ESL, primarily Dutch Creek Road and Evans Bar Road, and on SR 299, which provides access to the area from local communities. Throughout the construction periods, the amount of daily construction equipment traffic would be limited by staging the construction equipment and vehicles within the project ESL boundary for the duration of work. Impacts related to short-term increases in vehicle trips would be minimal. The use of area roads by project-related trucks and heavy equipment would increase wear and tear on the local roadways. Traffic safety hazards could arise for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians in the vicinity of the construction access routes as a result of the movement of project-related trucks and heavy construction equipment. The contractor would be required to implement a traffic control plan during construction to maximize public safety and maintain traffic flow. Impacts on transportation and traffic circulation would be minimal to moderate but would be temporary and less than significant.

### **Vegetation, Wildlife, and Wetlands including Forestry Resources**

Construction activities associated with the Proposed Action would result in a temporary loss of riparian vegetation and waters of the United States. However, in the long term, floodplain function and riverine processes would be restored by revegetation of alluvial features, particularly floodplains. Upland features (i.e., terraces) would also be restored, primarily by converting old dredge tailing deposits into productive wildlife habitat. Overall, the Proposed Action would increase structural and species diversity and would speed reestablishment of native riparian and upland vegetation. Long-term changes in river inundation periods are expected to increase both seasonal and perennial riparian habitats as well as offset impacts to wetlands and other waters. The project is designed to enhance the functions and services of the aquatic system, including wetlands and other waters.

The Proposed Action was planned to benefit riparian and upland habitat and function and has the potential to affect wildlife, including special-status wildlife species (designated BLM sensitive species and/or federally and state ESA-listed threatened and endangered species). Specific environmental commitments and project design features are included in the Proposed Action to ensure that activities occur in a manner that addresses potential impacts to special-status species, including avian and amphibian species.

No wildlife species listed under the ESA as threatened, endangered, or candidates for listing as threatened or endangered have been observed in the project area during field surveys. During the development of the Master EIR/EA/IS, Reclamation conducted informal consultation with the USFWS concerning effects to the ESA-listed northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*). Based on the consultation, known lack of suitable habitat and nests in the area, and Trinity River bird distribution data, Reclamation determined that there would be no effect on the northern spotted owl. The project area was specifically evaluated for northern spotted owl habitat and was considered unsuitable. The project area does not encompass or occur within designated critical habitat for the northern spotted owl; therefore, there would be no effect to the northern spotted owl or its designated critical habitat.

The Proposed Action, including the environmental commitments and project design features listed in Chapter 2 and Appendix B combined with riparian revegetation measures would ensure that the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to vegetation, wildlife, and wetlands.

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### **Water Resources and Quality**

Implementation of the Proposed Action, including construction activities in and adjacent to the low-flow channel, could temporarily increase turbidity and total suspended solids in the water column. The project could also result in a spill of hazardous materials (e.g., grease, solvents) into the Trinity River.

Construction activities would be staged and timed to minimize potential water quality effects, and appropriate project design features, such as placing clean rock berms around work areas and isolating them from the river, would be implemented to avoid and reduce water quality impacts. Turbidity effects would be localized and short-term, and the project would adhere to a water quality permit. The Spill Prevention Plan developed by the contractor would prevent hazardous material spillage. Therefore, impacts on water quality would be less than significant.

### **Wild and Scenic Rivers**

The Secretary of the Interior designated the Trinity River as a National Wild and Scenic River in 1981. Implementation of the Proposed Action would result in a long-term benefit to the form and function of the Trinity River relative to the values that existed on the date of designation, thereby enhancing the Outstandingly Remarkable Values for which it was designated as a Wild and Scenic River, including its anadromous fishery. Implementation of the Proposed Action would alter the riverine environment; however, construction activities would not permanently affect the scenic or recreational values of the Trinity River for which it was designated.

### **SUMMARY**

Implementation of the Proposed Action is expected to contribute to the long-term environmental quality and sustainability of the Trinity River ecosystem with no significant adverse impacts on the environment.

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH 40 CFR 1508.27**

After considering the environmental effects described for the Proposed Action in the Trinity River Channel Rehabilitation Site: Chapman Ranch Phase B (RM 83.5–83.8) EA/IS, it has been determined that implementation of the Proposed Action would not have significant environmental impacts, is in conformance with the BLM's RMP, and would not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, considering the context and intensity of impacts. Therefore, a supplemental EIS is not needed and will not be prepared.

This finding is based on my consideration of the CEQ's criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA/IS or as articulated in the letters of comment.

### **Context**

Based on the documentation in the EA/IS and project record, I find that the short- and long-term effects of the Proposed Action are not significant with respect to society as a whole, the affected region, or the site-specific location. The effects of the Proposed Action disclosed in Chapter 3 support the findings that it meets TRRP objectives established in the 2000 ROD and would be consistent with the resource management plans for the BLM and the Forest Service.

### **Intensity**

I have considered the potential intensity/severity of the impacts anticipated from the project decision relative to each of the 10 areas suggested for consideration by the CEQ. With regard to each:

- 1) ***Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.*** There would be no significant effects, beneficial or adverse, resulting from implementation of this project. The finding is not biased by the beneficial effects of the action. The construction of the Proposed Action at the Chapman Ranch Phase B site is expected to provide localized improvements in aquatic and riparian habitats currently present at the site. The Proposed Action would assist in meeting long-term needs to enhance fish habitat and provide properly functioning river conditions. Viewed within the context of a healthy Trinity River, and against implementing the larger river restoration program required under the ROD, this project would not result in any significant impacts.
- 2) ***The degree to which the Proposed Action affects public health and safety.*** Public health and safety would not be significantly affected by the project. Due to the limited duration of the Proposed Action and implementation of public safeguards, public safety would not be at risk. Standard Reclamation practices for notifying the public of heavy equipment activities would be implemented during construction activities.
- 3) ***Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.*** There would be no significant adverse effects on prime farmlands, park lands, floodplains, wetlands, historic or cultural resources, scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas. Although there would be no significant adverse effects in these areas, the Proposed Action would result in a minor amount of disturbance to river attributes while enhancing the outstandingly remarkable value (ORV)—the anadromous fishery—for which the river was designated as a Wild and Scenic River. The section of the Trinity River in the project ESL was designated as Scenic under both the federal and state Wild and Scenic Rivers Acts (WSRA; Public Law 90-542 1968). This designation serves to preserve the river's free-flowing condition, water quality (e.g., extremely low turbidity levels under low-flow conditions), and ORVs. The section of the Trinity River subject to this alternative was found to have ORVs due to its anadromous fishery. Appendix J provides a comprehensive analysis of this alternative consistent with the requirements of the Section 7 of the WSRA, and the W&S determination has now been signed by the BLM and Forest Service. The Proposed Action is programmatically tiered from the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration Program EIS, which recommended the implementation of the six components of the ROD. The Proposed Action, which involves the implementation of a subset of channel rehabilitation actions from the ROD, has no significant impacts within the context of the entire array of ROD restoration components.
- 4) ***The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.*** A federal action is controversial if a substantial dispute exists as to its size, nature or effect; there is no such controversy for the Proposed Action.
- 5) ***The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.*** Since the signing of the 2000 Trinity River Restoration Program ROD and efforts to begin its implementation, TRRP and other agencies have held numerous public meetings and open houses to obtain public input and provide the public with information on the overall TRRP rehabilitation activities. As part of ongoing TRRP outreach activities, TRRP staff members have met with local groups (e.g., fishing guides and mining groups) and individual landowners from the Junction City area to obtain stakeholder input and advice and to address general concerns not specific to the Chapman Ranch Phase B rehabilitation activities. Notice of all public meetings and other pertinent project information are announced in



local newspapers and posted on the TRRP's website: Appendix B includes a summary of the scoping and public involvement prior to preparation of the EA/IS.

- a. Consistent with Reclamation and BLM's NEPA requirements, the public review of the EA/IS began when the agencies posted the document to their official websites on May 20, 2020. The official public review period began on that date and continued through June 20, 2020. At the onset of the review period, notices informing the public of the availability of the EA/IS for review were posted on the TRRP website, at the TRRP Weaverville and BLM Redding Field offices, and in the *Trinity Journal* and *Redding Record Searchlight* newspapers; the public notices were also mailed to local landowners and emailed to interest groups.
  - b. After the public review period, public comment submittals were addressed with input from technical staff from the lead, cooperating, and responsible agencies. The one comment received and the TRRP's responses are included as an appendix to the Final EA/IS.
  - c. There are no known effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. The effects of the Proposed Action have been clearly evaluated in the EA/IS. Similar activities have been completed at past channel rehabilitation sites both downstream (Chapman Ranch Phase A site in 2019) and upstream (Deep Gulch–Sheridan Creek in 2017), and data collected from monitoring and analysis showed that no unique or unknown impacts to the human environment have resulted.
- 6) ***The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.*** These actions do not set a precedent for other projects that may be implemented to meet the goals and objectives of the TRRP. The Trinity River Flow Evaluation Report and, subsequently, the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration EIS and 2000 ROD collectively evaluated and recommended channel rehabilitation projects on the Trinity River below Lewiston Dam. The environmental effects of future projects would be analyzed and would take into account any new information collected during the implementation of the Proposed Action and other recently implemented projects.
- 7) ***Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*** Cumulative impacts are analyzed in Chapter 4. While some short-term adverse direct and indirect effects may result from the project, these effects have been analyzed in the EA/IS and would not lead to significant cumulative effects. Potentially significant long-term project effects from implementation of the ROD were evaluated in the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration EIS, later supplemented by the 2009 Master EIR, and updated in the EA/IS for the Chapman Ranch Phase B site. When considered in the context of cumulative watershed effects, the Proposed Action is intended to improve the alluvial processes and function of the mainstem Trinity River and, at the same time, improve the ability of the Trinity River to mobilize and transport sediment. Cumulative short-term impacts such as soil disturbance and turbidity would occur in response to the Proposed Action, but not to the extent that would cause significant impacts to downstream water quality.
- 8) ***The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.*** Based on surveys accomplished prior to this decision, this action will not adversely affect sites or structures eligible



for the National Register of Historic Places, or cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources. Reclamation and the BLM work closely with the Hoopa Valley Tribe and the Yurok Tribe, who are TMC members and have staff involved in the TRRP. Both tribes participated in the design of these projects. The Hoopa Valley Tribe is also a signatory to the TRRP PA. Pursuant to the TRRP PA (Stipulation IV), Reclamation has consulted with Indian tribes, Native American organizations, and individuals regarding the implementation of the PA and its stipulations to protect tribal interests. Based on environmental commitments and project design features listed in Chapter 2 and Appendix D, the decision-maker has determined that the Proposed Action will not result in the destruction of scientific, cultural, tribal, or historic resources.

- 9) ***The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.*** The Proposed Action would not adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the ESA. A Biological Opinion for the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration EIS and its effects on Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast coho salmon, Sacramento River winter-run chinook salmon, Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon, and Central Valley steelhead (NMFS 2000) addressing foreseeable TRRP activities was written in response to a Biological Assessment (BA) that reflected the findings in the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery FEIS/EIR.
- a. In December 2019, TRRP staff submitted a BA to the NMFS and initiated formal consultation on the effects of new TRRP sediment management and channel rehabilitation techniques, as well as the potential effect of floodplain restoration work throughout the Trinity River watershed rather than only on the mainstem Trinity River. Implementation strategies and conservation measures described in the 2019 BA will be employed during the proposed implementation of the Chapman Phase B Project. These conservation measures will reduce the impact of the Project on SONCC coho salmon to a less-than-significant level. While Section 7 consultation is underway, the TRRP will retain ESA coverage under the 2000 Biological Opinion.
  - b. During the development of the Master EIR, Reclamation, in coordination with BLM, conducted informal consultation with the USFWS concerning effects to the ESA-listed northern spotted owl. Based on the consultation, known lack of suitable habitat and spotted owl nests in the area, and Trinity River bird distribution data, Reclamation determined that there would be no effect on the northern spotted owl. The Chapman Ranch Phase B site was specifically evaluated by a BLM biologist for northern spotted owl habitat and was considered unsuitable. The project area does not encompass or occur within designated critical habitat for the northern spotted owl; therefore, there would be no effect to the northern spotted owl or its designated critical habitat. Reclamation and the BLM determined that a Biological Assessment was not required since the Proposed Action would have no effect on the northern spotted owl or its critical habitat.
  - c. No federally or state ESA-listed threatened or endangered plant species occur within or adjacent to the site boundaries defined for the Proposed Action.
- 10) ***Whether the action threatens a violation of federal, state, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.*** The implementation of the Proposed Action would not threaten a violation of federal, state, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment. Implementation of the Proposed Action would not threaten violation of any laws. Its implementation meets requirements under the ROD, the ESA, the Clean Water Act, the

Finding of No Significant Impact

Federal Land Protection and Management Act (FLPMA), NEPA, the Clean Air Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Shasta-Trinity National Forest Land and Resources Management Plan, and BLM's RMP, as amended, for the Redding Field Office.

The Proposed Action described in this finding is consistent with BLM's RMP, the FLPMA, and the California Environmental Quality Act. The following permits are required to authorize the project:

- Section 404, Clean Water Act, Nationwide Permit 27 (San Francisco District, USACE);
- Section 401, Clean Water Act Water Quality Certification (Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region);
- Section 7, Endangered Species Act, Biological Opinion (NMFS);
- Encroachment Permits (Trinity County); and
- Floodplain Development Permit (Trinity County).

#### **FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

The Proposed Action to implement the rehabilitation activities, including those specified under the jurisdiction of BLM, is consistent with the intent of the RMP for the Redding Field Office with respect to resource management conditions.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

The Proposed Action is expected to be constructed in summer 2021; some preparatory brush clearing and road grading on river left may begin in 2020 pending environmental clearances, and all construction activities are expected to be complete by the end of 2021. In any year, all in-channel rehabilitation work must be performed between July 15 and October 15. Revegetation would take place during construction and in the fall and winter months following construction; seeding would primarily be used in the uplands, and cuttings or plants would be used in riparian areas. Irrigation and vegetation maintenance may take place for 3 to 5 years post-construction or through fall 2024 but would be minimized in this remote location.

#### **CONTACT**

For additional information concerning the Proposed Action, contact Megan Simon, NEPA Coordinator for the Chapman Ranch Phase B Project, Trinity River Restoration Program, P.O. Box 1300, and 1313 Main Street, Weaverville California, 96093. Email: [msimon@usbr.gov](mailto:msimon@usbr.gov).